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NOBODY

Beautiful propaganda

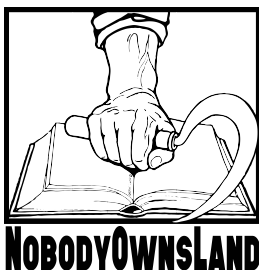
OWNS

From the marginalized

LAND.

For the marginalized

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We are Waiting for The Country to Collapse

By Luis Heard

Ex-President faces felonies, while
the current chief justifies more weapons
to the genocidal power bombing
Palestine, casualties preserved as
victims of a “complex situation,”
Fortune Five-Hundred complacent with the
climate crisis, record highs weathering
the vulnerable, record profits year
after year achieved, wages keep us one
paycheck from homelessness, landlord lobbies
perfect the formula for raising rent,
bailouts for banks written in the budget,
children’s lunches the subject of debate,
criminal cops killing activists, state-
sanctioned exchange programs overseas, six
companies own every major network,
media won’t show public resistance,
the empire eating itself, forgive me
if the solution seems bloody, but this
government won’t represent its people.

What's The Deal With "Settler-Colonialism"?

By Dechoukaj

"We recognize that our struggle for safe, secure housing and the battle against gentrification in Kentucky is intertwined with the struggle for national liberation and resistance to settler-colonialism in Palestine."

— Louisville Tenants Union statement of solidarity with the Palestinian revolution

On October 7th 2023 the Palestinian liberation struggle surged forward into a new era, bloodying the nose of Zionism and proving that none of the West's fancy weapons make it invincible. The effects of this surge aren't simply regional either. While many in mainstream politics express fear of the conflict "spilling over," they fail to recognize that this is already a global conflict particularly intertwined with class and national struggle in the United States. This is evidenced in an explosion in the usage of one term which the US left-wing has historically struggled with: settler-colonialism. The term commonly shows up both in statements by major groups within the Palestinian resistance (be they Communist or some flavor of Nationalist) and in organizations around the world expressing solidarity with (or spineless dismay at) the Palestinian resistance.

What's the deal with this term? Why not use

older and widely-known terms like “imperialism”? What is “settler-colonialism”, and what does it apply to? I hope this piece can serve as a sort of crash-course for those of us struggling for liberation here (and those who want to be a part of that struggle) to better understand this not just as an abstract phenomenon, but a concrete process that continues to define who our enemies are and how we must move against them.



Goblins by Sam Stephens; oil pastel and ink, 2024

A little explanation for a big issue

The concept of settler-colonialism emerged out of the national liberation struggles of Indigenous,

Black, and Brown peoples in the late 20th century, particularly in the United States, Canada, South Africa, and Palestine. In these struggles, revolutionaries found that terms like “Imperialism” and “Colonialism” didn’t fully express what was happening in their situations. Many of the methods and frameworks which appeared to work for revolutionaries in Europe and Asia, which enabled them to correctly organize against imperialism and capitalism and seize state power, have repeatedly fizzled out and died in these countries, especially the US and Canada. What happened?

The key to understanding settler-colonialism is perceiving the similarities between the states these movements struggled against (let’s call them settler-states), recognizing them as distinct from the European empires that came before them. These include but aren’t limited to:

First, settler-states are organized not just around defending the class interests of the owners and exploiters, but *settlers*. As we saw in the ruthless murder of David McAtee here in Louisville back in 2020, it doesn’t matter if you own a business or land, if you aren’t a settler the Military and Cops will gun you down just like any other “undesirable” they see speaking out on the streets. Non-settlers will be extended offers of “upward mobility” only insofar as it serves to divide and conquer Indigenous and Black national liberation

struggles. This has (so far) been successful in the US, but as we see with the indiscriminate slaughter of over 30,000 people in Palestine since the 7th, it's "last hired, first fired" the moment this divide and conquer strategy breaks down.

Second, what defines a settler is less about personal lineage and more about racialized capitalism. In the US, this means that whether you're a settler or not isn't about whether your family arrived on the Mayflower in 1620. It's about your proximity to *whiteness*. It's not simply German people, Irish people, French people, but *white* people who have the advantage within settler capitalism. Whiteness is the social, cultural construct that supports the rule of the settler classes. It erases and overrules all other distinctions and conflicts, embraces the settlers' parasitic relationship to all racialized peoples worldwide and by extension links their self-interest to the continuation of imperialism and capitalism. Through mainstream media, culture, religion, etc. we are all pressured to implicitly accept whiteness, either accepting the role of civilizing ruler (with the economic benefits of global imperialism) or accepting the role of barbarian to be ruled. This places all of us in a position where striking against the settler-state and imperialism is unthinkable. Protest, sure. Strike, definitely. Maybe even cause social unrest if you'd like. But revolution? Revolution would only make things worse. Why,

it'd be downright *impolite*!

Third, ***land*** is the basis of power in settler-states above all other forms of private property. Oppressed nations within the settler state are systematically denied effective control of the land. Even after the supposed achievement of “equality” in the US, white people own 98% of the land. The five largest white landowners in the US own more acres of land than all Black people in the country *combined*! For the various Indigenous nations which the US displaced the situation is even more dire. The US Federal government owns the vast majority of Indigenous land in “trust”, with a solemn oath that it's for the benefit of Indigenous peoples. In any case, even when non-settlers hold the deed to land, history has shown repeatedly that any legal document means nothing in the face of settler interests. Buried under the US highway system and gentrified shopping districts is the ruins of countless Black and Indigenous communities.

So what do we do about it?

First and foremost we need to understand that the struggle for liberation in the United States, like the Palestinian struggle, is a struggle of workers for national liberation and control of the land. This means that organizations like the Louisville Tenants Union are at the forefront of revolutionary mass struggle. Deeply connect with these orgs,

learn from how they organize and strike at the guts of the imperial core from the inside.

We need to reject dogma and take the time to build up an analysis of the class struggle here, one that honestly answers the question of “who are our enemies, who are our friends?” The perspectives, idealism, and toxic “individualism” of whiteness need to be viewed as poison to the collective working class movement. This doesn’t mean people of European descent have no place in the class struggle, or should be forced out, but we frankly don’t need a single additional Bernie Sanders or Elizabeth Warren. We need more John Browns, Ana Montes, and Laura Whitehorns.

Through this struggle and the national liberation struggles of Black and Indigenous people, a popular cultural revolution must be waged alongside the militant class struggle to dismantle and reject the legitimacy of whiteness. We need to make the unthinkable, revolution, thinkable. We can’t do much immediately about the material benefits that imperialism gives to whiteness, but we can transform consciousness to make the dispossessed reject the legitimacy of our rulers and, hopefully, make a few of the rulers reject their crown. The Palestinian revolutionaries don’t concern themselves with saving Israel, and we need to likewise *stop trying to save the United States*.

Muqawma

By Afnan

we can't only talk about the watermelons
color resistance
the flag in a different form
held not waved
we have to talk about the olives too
of course
but the pomegranates, the strawberries, the oranges
they can't be neglected
as their juices drip down
our hands and mouths
trying to save every sweet drop
the waste of our labor
unbearable
never understood by those who can't cultivate the land
and especially by those who refuse to
every sweet drop of juice and oil that drips down
like blood
like love
like tears
our gratefulness resides in the roots of the olive trees
that
they burn
the roots are singed
but the soil remembers

Untitled

Maybe it was the fire hoses
Suddenly appearing on
Black and white TV
Or the killings but

It couldn't have been
The killings because
Everybody knew
Well before they saw

The fire hoses.

Claude les Champs



Untitled by Cece

T4T by Sam Stephens; collage, mixed media, 2023





Untitled

By Gabe

Here lies an offering:

My mother, circa 1992. An under-aged dancer, posing
in a night-club when the picture is taken.

The owner of the club let her in
for her tendency to turn her time on the dance
floor into a holy experience
for anyone who could see her move.

I hold the polaroid in my hand, and want to keep the joy of this night
alive and safe with my love.

Love, like other verbs, requires action to be maintained and upheld,

I think how the archival process is inherently a labor of love.

The archive:

A framework for loving each other
by prioritizing how we handle with care
the evidence of one another's existence.

As if to say, "I love you, so I will carry you with me.

Your life should come wherever we are going next.

Your story matters, so I will tell it and keep it near."

The archive:

Inherently a labor of loss. A lesson in learning
to love the spaces we leave. A constant questioning of
What life is teeming in the unaccounted

Center the tender data in conversation with
our larger preoccupations with memory, and permanence, and belonging.
It mattered that on this night my mother was young, and fly, and free.
Because the fact and the shadow
of her freedom keeps finding ways to free me.

(not just) another death in Jenin

By Afnan

I think about all those young people
when their picture goes up
I think about the person on the other side
of the camera
telling them to stand straight and proud
to smile
proud
I think about them celebrating their joy
the joy that comes but always goes
a graduation, a birthday, a new job, a new haircut
stood next to a tree, next to their home
their friends, family
I think about their smiles
did they know how long they'd be canonized with that photo
will they be smitten with their happy faces
when their family inevitably sends their picture to the news
or anyone who might care to say a few words
will they have known their smiling face would be captioned
with the date of their death

Eli Lilly

By A. Reyes

Today, I read headlines telling me,
“Eli Lilly dropped insulin to thirty five.”
The news celebrate, but I only seethe
for the people before this, no longer alive.
I lacked the condition, but I saw sin.
Sins of past headlines, lamenting
those whose rations ran out, their insulin.
Who told them their ending?
That it was over, a company decided
that they met their FOAD metrics.
“Stop telling me you need it,” he chided.
(Lilly profited in the billions, One Point Six).
Why do they have to lie as they die slowly?
Why can’t they tell them what number it takes,
to tell them to Fuck Off And Die (FOAD).
Why did bodies have to make lakes?

Dispatch From The Capitol / Trans Rights Are Human Rights

By Lynn

Instagram: @che._esy, YouTube: orwhatever

March 29,2023

Trans Rights Are Human Rights

Why do we have to continuously have the conversation of who gets to be perceived, embraced and respected as “human”?

I’m exhausted.

The following was written in the state capitol building the day deadly legislation was passed by the name of Senate Bill 150. This bill aims to erase queer children’s identity, voices and safety in every school across the state. For context on my state of mind:

Two close friends of my family were murdered on their mother’s porch four days in advance. They left behind two beautiful children and a domino effect of devastation. I felt gutted and defeated before ever feeling liberated. I had been drunk for four consecutive days. I was completely consumed with my grief and the struggle I had been organized to overcome... I still didn’t understand the severity of the cause and the similarities of it all.

Upon arriving the fog sat on the building of the capitol like a heavy blanket. Refusing to reveal the entirety of the structure that is capitol. We all noticed the foreshadowing that lied before us. We all felt compelled to address what lied. True collective solidarity even in the face of the unknown.

My partner and I walked around the building before the action. We both were seemingly more curious with the others current experience. When we arrived in the basement the air was heavy and dense. It felt suffocating, like it was only enough air for one of us to breathe. You? Or Me? My partner actually noticed the change in atmosphere first, they brought it to my attention. When I became conscious of the air pressure I realized I had been holding my breath for what felt like days. Numbing myself in an attempt to escape pain. We began upward in search of support open to exploration outside of the building.

There were people gathered around the stairs leading up to the entrance. They held signs and shouted at the illusive fog filled exterior. Many of them opting to remain outside rather than face the very people who feel their existence is not worthy. I cannot blame them. After all I showed up with my cloak of safety and validity being as though I am a cisgender woman. Would I have the same courage if I didn't have this privilege?

My partners voice brought me out of my own mind as they asked if I was ready to go in. When we walked back inside I turned to my partner and asked “How is it that this building echoes, yet the only sounds we hear are our own voices?” I retreated back into my mind from fear I had said something weird. When it’s all said and done we will never cease to speak.

Society is we to change. Not for the better but for the broader. It starts with a connection. A connection to me and you, all of us too. We can’t be scared to come in and speak but, if you are, don’t be scared to come out and see. Come as you are.

On that note I’m grieving, but I must keep going. I am reminded today that I am not alone. I thank God for them, for We & for Me.

*The following was written nearly a year after I had this experience. I continued to investigate and grow and use my voice where the opportunity presented itself. I remained committed to being organized. I’ve had many revelations about the privilege of my own experience while I simultaneously held space for the traumatic impact that comes with my experience as well. I was encouraged, **supported** and guided to achieve this level of self-love from my queer comrades.*

December 8, 2023

A Letter To My Trans Sisters

It's hurtful to know I have contributed to the micro and macro aggressions. To the hateful projections. To the commitment to misunderstanding. All in attempt to protect myself from a group of people who are non-threatening.

Love Lynn

I want to end by saying that I am a cisgender black woman who can only speak for myself. My voice doesn't echo the thoughts, intentions or beliefs of anyone else's experiences but my own. I've been encouraged to write for this publication that specializes in amplifying queer + colored & indigenous voices. This prompted me to assess the space I'm able to take up and how I go about doing so. With that being said I realized I wasn't an ally simply because I wasn't bigoted. I didn't become an ally until I became organized.

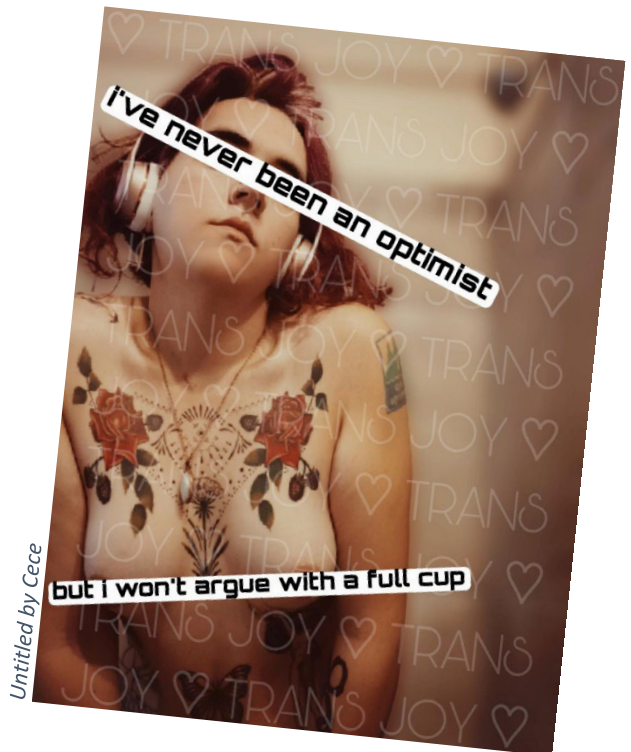
My name is Lynn thank you for holding space for me, alongside me.

Untitled

I used to be afraid of mirrors
how I'd look into them
and tears would form
not comfortable seeing the image
looking back at me
how somehow I wanted to be someone else
forget who I was
forget where I came from

but the mirrors started talking back
telling me that it was okay
to feel welcomed in a body I did not create
and that I can still make it a home

-mo v



This Electric Sense Conjoined

This electric sense conjoined
to indifferent gunslingers
seeming stolid they stood
in the dust awaiting some
cosmic countdown to an
imaginary number solving
nothing regarding why the
gods might count differently
according to their origin
and how the first feuds
were passed down from
generation to generation.

And while rabbits begin to
turn into dragons and the
moon and sun are debating
whether fire and water are
compatible we watch bombs
filled with phosphorus fall
onto children somehow guilty
of being born in the wrong
time or the wrong skin or the
wrong place where certain
gods are less interested in
kindness mercy or justice.

The headlines barely have room
for the coronal mass ejections or
the other wars or the deaths of
so called dignitaries while they
invent new ways to twist words
that become meaningless and
no amount of therapy affects can
resolve the dissonance ringing this
electric sense conjoined to indifferent
gunslingers seeming stolid they stood
in the dust awaiting some cosmic
countdown fearing zero is rational.

Claude les Champs

A Way of Life Purchased, Fragmented, Rebranded, and Resold

By Afnan

it's a lot of people unwilling to lie to themselves anymore
it's retribution on patriarchal culture
it's an award of acceptance unto oneself
it's little acts of losing shame that is
unneeded and unhelpful
it's a dictatorship of the people
ruling ourselves not
the machines and corporations selling us uniformity
and individualism at once

the flesh is
the flesh is
the flesh is raw and heavy
like constantly walking in
a corpse's skin, already
and did you know how grey they get
and did you know that a little girl that dreams of being a
princess
by marriage
is a little girl too scared to save herself

look at the womanly way my nose protrudes from my face
look at my red-hot ears with two new holes to
embellish upon my commitment to hardness
it's women being women
by being warriors
by being militant
by defending one another and ourselves
with the physical strength they told us was unattractive
because it blurred lines
it transgressed them and
really it just didn't serve them as much as it serves us

*I'm not food for the soul.
I refuse to be easily digestible.
A few generations shy of being bought and sold,
I will not shrink myself.
I won't cease to grow,
even if it means unlearning
all I've come to know.*

-Lynn

**If you find this book, take it. It's yours.
Educate yourself, educate others, and
always expand what is possible!**

Nobody Owns Land is a project by Queer and racialized people, for Queer and racialized people. We are seeking to create a local, quarterly physical publication where our reporting, our ideas, and our art can flourish on our terms.

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